

Edith Nesbit
THE TREASURE SEEKERS

Read by **Teresa Gallagher**

**JUNIOR
CLASSICS**



1	This is the story of the different ways we looked for treasure	3:13
2	Then we left off going to school	2:32
3	Oswald spoke first	3:24
4	We all went down into the cellar	3:11
5	Presently Dicky came back	3:03
6	When we had got that money by digging for treasure	2:41
7	We thought a long time whether we'd write a letter	3:26
8	It was not bad – being in London entirely on our own	4:40
9	She happened quite accidentally	3:03
10	We went over the stones on tiptoe	3:02
11	Then all of a sudden came one of those uncomfortable times	3:09
12	Noël was quite tiresome for ever so long	3:21
13	Albert-next-door was very tiresome	4:03
14	It was Albert's uncle who thought of our trying a newspaper	3:04
15	Chapter V – by Noël	3:55
16	Being editors is not the best way to wealth	3:24
17	Everyone knows what it is like to go in the train	3:18
18	"You wish to borrow money. When will you repay it?"	3:12
19	When the money was all spent	3:57
20	It was very silly	3:13

21	One day when we suddenly found that we had half a crown	3:36
22	About five Eliza slipped out	3:50
23	The bottle got quite dusty where we had put it	3:06
24	The clergyman seemed to be speechless	2:51
25	Of course as soon as we had promised to consult my Father	3:37
26	Of course the next thing was for one of us to catch a cold	3:22
27	When Alice came back she was very quiet	3:38
28	The next day Albert's uncle took Noël away	2:21
29	A day or two after Noël came back from Hastings	4:01
30	So Dicky and Oswald crept down	3:41
31	And quite suddenly	3:10
32	The minute he'd said it the burglar	3:00
33	You have no idea how uncomfortable the house was	2:52
34	Alice had put on the nursery tablecloth, which is green	3:11
35	H.O. did not care about waiting	3:07
36	It was all very well for Father to ask	3:34
37	We elders arranged everything	3:04
38	So we at once showed the Uncle	2:50
39	Now it is coming near the end of our treasure-seeking	3:26
40	We took all the parcels into the nursery	2:57
41	Then the Uncle looked at Father	3:13

Total time: 2:15:41

Edith Nesbit

THE TREASURE SEEKERS

This is the story of the different ways we looked for treasure, and I think when you have read it you will see that we were not lazy about the looking.

So begins *The Story of the Treasure Seekers*, in which six children – Dora, Oswald, Dicky, Alice and Noël (twins), and H.O. (Horace Octavius) – embark on the noble pursuit of restoring their family's fallen fortunes. Once, the Bastables had lots of money; but now, the children see that they no longer have silver cutlery, that there are holes in the carpet, and that they don't get pocket money anymore.

So, they set out on many adventures to try and find treasure: they dig for it in the garden (with the snivelling boy Albert from next door), they rescue a rich man from mortal peril in the hope of a generous reward, they write a newspaper, and, of course, they get into a lot of trouble without meaning to. But then, they meet the Indian uncle, who will change their lives completely...

Who is telling the story? It is one of the

children – and you are left to work out which one. There are clues, as the narrator is inexperienced and sometimes lets things slip by mistake; but, just in case you don't know, the identity is revealed later on.

The skill with which Nesbit writes from the perspective of a young child is striking. She identifies with the minds of children, with their imagination, their energy, and with the way in which their experience shapes them. Most importantly, she creates six utterly individual, and delightful, characters.

Born in 1858, Edith Nesbit was the youngest in her family. She had two brothers, a sister and a half-sister, and during her earliest years they all lived in an agricultural college in London which had been started by Edith's grandfather. Edith described this time of her life as an 'Eden': she felt happy and secure.

When Edith was still a little girl, her father died. From then on, the stability of her life changed: the family moved around a lot. She went to various boarding schools, including one at which punishments came thick and fast for all kinds of tiny

misdeemeanours. It would be unimaginable today! Her mother told her she would get used to it, even though Edith cried herself to sleep.

But she hadn't been at that school long when it was all change: they were off to the South of France where her mother had found a house. Edith was nearly to be left behind, but she begged to be taken with her mother and sisters. Her brothers, Alfred and Henry, remained at another school in England. To begin with, Edith was placed with a family so that she could learn French. She and the daughter were the same age, and they got on immediately. She had a wonderful time. When her mother moved again to a different area of France, Edith was sorry to leave her French family.

There were more schools and homes following this, before a happy three years spent at 'Halstead Hall' in Kent, a house rented by her mother for the family:

From a laburnum tree in the corner of the lawn we children slung an improvised hammock, and there I used to read and dream and watch the swaying green gold leaf and blossom.

Here, the children could run through a field at the back of the house to a railway line – and there is the seed, planted in Nesbit's memory, that later grew into her popular story *The Railway Children*.

From the age of fourteen to seventeen, Nesbit began to concentrate on writing poetry and even had some of it published in several magazines. She was to write a lot more poetry over the years, as well as her novels.

The young poet grew into a bright and striking woman, and married a charismatic bank clerk called Hubert Bland. The two moved in intellectual circles and were both socialists. They formed a debating group, which, as it gained more members, became the Fabian Society.

During the 1880s Nesbit was a lecturer and writer on socialism, but as she became a successful children's writer these activities diminished. Her most famous novels include *The Story of the Treasure Seekers*, *The Wouldbegoods*, *Five Children and It*, *The Phoenix and the Carpet*, *The Railway Children* and *The Enchanted Castle*.

Notes by Genevieve Helsby

The music on this recording was taken from the NAXOS catalogue

ELGAR WAND OF YOUTH SUITES

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Music programmed by Sarah Butcher

Edith Nesbit

THE TREASURE SEEKERS

Read by **Teresa Gallagher**

Six children decide that the only way to restore the fortunes of their family is to go out and do it themselves.

They produce a series of madcap schemes and one after another try them out with varying degrees of success, most resulting in trouble rather than riches.

But then one scheme begins to look more promising than the rest...



Teresa Gallagher has performed in many leading roles in both plays and musicals across the country, London's West End and off Broadway. In addition, she is a well-known voice to listeners of BBC Radio Drama. Her work on film includes *The Misadventures of Margaret* and Mike Leigh's *Topsy Turvy*. For Naxos AudioBooks she has recorded the *Biography of Jane Austen* and selections from *The Decameron* by Boccaccio. She also read *Classic Women's Short Stories* and *Heidi* for Naxos AudioBooks.

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